THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV):(a) According to the advance estimates released by the Central Statistical Organization in the month of June, 2003 the growth rate in Agriculture, including Allied Sectors, in the year 2002-03 is (-) 3.2 per cent as compared to 5.7 per cent in the year 2001-02.

(b) The negative growth of agriculture in 2002-03 is due to severe drought in several parts of the country. The year 2002 was the first all-India drought year after a continuous spell of 14 good monsoons that followed the previous all-India drought year of 1987.

(c) and (d) Keeping in view the significant share of horticulture in agriculture and its potential in boosting the agricultural growth, the Union Budget 2003-04 has proposed a new Central Sector Scheme on Hi-tech Horticulture and Precision Farming. The major components of the scheme will be use of hi-tech interventions like fertigation, use of biotechnological tools, green food production, and hi-tech green houses.

Drought relief to Rajasthan

†571. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) Government's norms for providing assistance to farmers of Rajasthan under the drought relief fund;

(b) whether Government have received details with regard to drought relief from the State Government;

(c) whether Government are planning to give more drought relief to the farmers of the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV):(a) to (d) Due to the severity of the drought faced by the State, assistance at a more liberal scale was provided—foodgrains and funds were allocated to

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

cover all rural BPL families and a majority of rural APL families unlike other severely affected States where foodgrains were allocated to provide employment to 50% rural BPL house-holds. On this basis, in addition to the release of entire Central share of CRF for 2002-03 and 2003-04, amounting to Rs.350.88 crores, assistance from NCCF amounting to Rs.889.61 crores was released to Rajasthan for the drought 2002-03. 31.10 lakh MTs of foodgrains costing Rs.3110 crores was allocated to the State free of cost. The assistance provided is till the end of July,2003.

Besides Railways have been providing free transportation of water and fodder in the State.

Agricultural Employment Generation

572. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Agriculture is in the state of crisis as there is a stagnation of agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and fall in per capita GDP in agriculture in recent years;

(b) whether the agricultural employment generation has considerably declined in the last decade;

(c) whether this is due to the neo-liberal reforms introduced in the early 1990's; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take to encourage agricultural employment generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV):(a) As may be seen from the following table, the GDP in agriculture and allied sectors at constant prices during the last five years registered a decline only in one year *i.e.* 2002-03. The decline in 2002-03 reflects the sharp decline in agricultural production on account of drought in several parts of the country.